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ABSTRACT

This study in contemporary campaign communications concentrates on a state-level legislative election in a western state. The candidate selected for analysis (anonymous) expressed his views on the campaign issues and the message he thought he was sending to voters. Voters were sampled to determine the issue- and non-issue-related messages that they received and interpreted from various media. Personal face-to-face campaigning was found to be most effective, with television messages second. A discrepancy between the ideas the candidate thought he was sending to voters and the qualities of the ideas actually perceived by the voters was also found. (CH)

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"Candidate and Electorate Perceptions of the Nature and Function of Media Messages: A Case Study Approach"

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"Candidate and Electorate Perceptions of
the Nature and Function of Media
Messages: A Case Study Approach"

Research paradigms for the study of contemporary campaign communication have generally focused on selected facets of political campaigns. Many studies (Hartmann, 1936; Gilkinson, et al., 1953; Froman and Skipper, 1962; Glaser, 1965; Greenberg, 1965; Roper, 1966; Conway, 1968; Carlson and Habel, 1969; Sanders and Pace, 1969; Russell, 1971; Eli, 1971; Sheinkopf, et al., 1971; Atkin, et al., 1971; Hirsch, 1971) have focused on receiver functions of various message and media factors. Others (McGrath and McGrath, 1962; Stricker, 1963; Brooks, 1967; Beck, 1969; Douglas, 1972) have focused primarily on receiver behavior. Many other rhetorical analyses, such as Mandel's (1970), have focused on sender behavior, media, and messages. Still others, such as Mortensen (1968) and Stearns (1970), have focused primarily on media messages. But no study seems to empirically assess the communicator's strategies and tactics as they correspond to receivers' perceptions of the campaign. This paper reports an exploratory, descriptive case study of a state legislative campaign and focuses on 1) the candidate's strategies and tactics regarding issues, messages, and media; 2) the electorate's perceptions of the candidate, media, and issues; and 3) the correspondence between the perceptions of the candidate and the electorate.[1]

METHOD

The campaign selected for study was a state legislative race in a Western state. A campaign of this scope enjoys some advantages regarding controlled observations. The study of a national campaign, such as one for President, involves many variables and factors that could probably not be identified or assessed; some campaign strategy aspects of the campaign might even be deliberately concealed. A campaign for United States Senator or Congressman, while not national in scope, might involve activities outside of the home state. A state legislative campaign, on the other hand, is largely restricted not only to a single state, but primarily to the district represented.

The campaign took place in one of the only two principal population centers in the Western state. The campaign and the candidate for study were selected systematically by criteria which were specified prior to selection. First, the campaign should be expected to exhibit considerable use of varying media. Second, the candidate should be a viable, determined, and active one. His success should be conceivable but not entirely predetermined. A candidate who was not an incumbent might be most likely to fulfill this criteria. Lastly, the candidate must agree to cooperate, and he should be a credible and sincere source with whom a trusting relationship is possible. These characteristics seemed prerequisite to a candidate's willingness to candidly reveal specific data and strategies involved in the campaign.

Systematic interviews with previously successful state legislative candidates were used to narrow the possible selections. Just prior to the Primary Election,

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[1]The data reported here is selected from the author's dissertation, in progress at University of Southern California. This is a preliminary analysis of data only. A more thorough analysis will follow.

the cooperation of a candidate, known herein as Mr. Z, was solicited, and he agreed to cooperate.

The perceptions of the candidate were assessed by intensive, systematic interviews with the candidate. Five interviews were distributed throughout the nine week campaign which immediately followed the Primary Election. Each interview lasted approximately one hour. An interview schedule was developed and used for each interview. First, the candidate was asked to speculate about his image among the electorate. A second category dealt with messages and issues; the candidate was queried, in varying ways, about how he perceived the role of issues in the campaign. A third category in the interview schedule focused on media, the degree to which various media were being used and their purpose.

The perceptions of the electorate were measured by a questionnaire. Two representative samples of 157 registered voters were drawn. The first sample was drawn during a seven day period at the mid-point of the campaign, during the fourth week. The second sample was drawn during a seven day period which was one week prior to the end of the campaign. The questionnaire focused on four major areas. First, respondents' perceived political party affiliation was measured with a scale adapted from the Survey Research Center (Robinson, et al., 1968, p. 496). Second, an open-ended question sought to measure the respondent's perceptions of issues: respondents were asked, "What concerns you most about state government? Please indicate five state issues that you, as a voter, think the state Senate and Assembly should act upon." Third, the candidate's image among voters was measured by means of the semantic differential instrument developed by Kjeldahl, Carmichael, and Mertz (1971) through factor analysis. The seven scales are: known-unknown; straightforward-devious; trustworthy-untrustworthy; real-phony; truthful-untruthful; industrious-lazy; and involved-uninvolved. Lastly, media usage among voters was measured by means of an item which listed "some common ways of communicating with voters" and which asked respondents to rank the sources which were "most helpful in forming an opinion of Mr. Z." Respondents were asked to rank the five most helpful means and "invited" to rank more than five. The categories of media were: A. television and radio interviews and news stories; B. billboards, posters, and yard signs; C. newspaper stories and editorials; D. personal contact with Mr. Z (including speeches) or with his campaign workers (including telephone); E. television advertisements; F. your family, friends and associates; G. newspaper advertisements; H. mailed advertisements; I. handbills, badges, bumper stickers, etc.; J. radio advertisements; K. other source: please specify.

RESULTS

Candidate Perceptions

Candidate image. Campaign models suggest that voters are stratified for purposes of designing appropriate strategies and tactics. Froman (1966), for example suggests that voters are stratified on the basis of whether they are supporters of the candidate, latent supporters or opposition. Other belive that voters are stratified on the basis of political party; for example, Converse, et al. (1969) concluded in their analysis of recent elections that "in the moment of truth in the polling booth, party allegiance seems the most relevant cue for many voters if conditions permit it to be used [p. 1099] [emphasis in the original];" also, Robinson, et al. (1968) offer evidence that party identification is "by far the

best predictor of a respondent's voting behavior [p. 495]." Still others doubt the importance of parties: Burnham (1970), for example, offers empirical evidence that American politics are experiencing a "critical realignment" of voters which is not based on parties. The candidate in the present study, Mr. Z, said that parties were not necessarily an important factor in his attempt to secure votes. He said that voters were "individualistic" and that his image would be established on that basis; his primary interest was, "Can the individual voter be persuaded on a one-to-one basis to vote for me?"

Issues and Media Messages. Mr. Z's perceptions of issues were probed in varying ways throughout the campaign, and a conceptualization very much like that described by Froman and Skipper (1962) emerged. Further, Mr. Z's perceptions of the nature and functions of issues seemed consistent with his campaign efforts, and in one area his efforts were affected by issues.

The nature of issues in a campaign is that they are not clearly and simply extant; rather, Mr. Z said, issues are conceived by the candidate. Indeed, Mr. Z said, a campaign may be run on the basis of "non-issues:" sound government, freedom, reduction of taxes, and fair pay for a day's work were the examples that he offered. He said that few "real issues," in the sense of subjects for agreement and disagreement, were articulated in most state-level campaigns. The way in which Mr. Z conceptualizes categories of issues, "non-issues" and "real issues," seems very much like that of Froman and Skipper's (1962) categories: "style issues" and "position issues."

The role of issues in a state legislative campaign may be very small, Mr. Z indicated. Issues will seldom function in a positive sense but may function in a negative sense: that is, campaigning on an issue may function to harm a candidate's election possibilities if his position is perceived as contrary to the electorate's; but a campaign which actively articulates a position on an issue probably will not receive massive electoral support for that reason. Mr. Z suggested several reasons why issues do not play a prominent role in state-level campaigns. First, a great diversity in public opinions would exist in regard to most "real issues." Second, in order to articulate positions on issues, a great deal of time and money would necessarily be invested in a pamphlet on positions. Third, in order to effectively command the electorate's attention, the issues would necessarily be of a strongly emotional type, and these issues are not easily conceived or communicated.

Mr. Z's campaign efforts seemed consistent with his conceptualization of the nature and functions of issues. The candidate was asked to predict how voters would respond if they were asked to identify the issues in the campaign. Mr. Z listed five possible responses: illegitimate use of welfare; greater care for senior citizens; efficient administration of the state's workmen's benefits program; improved public employees' retirement benefits; and reduced corruption in government. On the other hand, Mr. Z said that he focused his campaign on three concepts and only one of these coincided with the five issues just mentioned: conflict of interest among public officials. One might consider all three concepts to be "non-issues:" the other two were full financial disclosure by candidates and the obligations of public utility companies. Mr. Z also tried to indicate his position on one "real issue:" he opposed cross-town bussing of pupils, but he repeatedly emphasized that his view was the one articulated by nearly all other local and state-level candidates; as such, he implied that he did not expect the articulation of this issue to function in a positive sense, and one would not expect the issue to function in a negative sense because of its "universality."

Since campaign efforts were not oriented toward focusing on "real issues," the interviewer probed the candidate regarding the content of his campaign messages. Mr. Z said that most messages focused primarily on exposure of his name. In varying degrees, campaign messages via the following media focused primarily on name exposure and to only a small extent on issues: television and newspaper advertisements, billboards, posters, yardsigns, telephone and neighborhood canvassing, and handbills. Four other means of communicating with voters might be expected to focus to a greater extent on issues, but consistently enthusiastic, clear-cut articulation of positions did not seem to take place among radio advertising, mailings, public appearances, or press releases. The first of these, radio advertising, was to be used very little. Mailings and public appearances both focused to some degree on issues in order to indicate adaptation to the concerns of the receivers, but Mr. Z said that issue orientation was not the chief goal. For example, mailings addressed to members of a veterans' group essentially merely indicated the candidate's interest in veteran's problems. Another letter to registered Republican voters was signed by a well known Republican; the letter merely endorsed Mr. Z as an old friend who deserved Republican support. Mr. Z said that public appearances functioned essentially in the same way: an attempt was made to demonstrate that the candidate was interested in the problems of the group in attendance; but the chief goal was to expose the candidate's name by his presence. Press releases were not issue-oriented for reasons which differed slightly. As with the use of radio, Mr. Z did not anticipate extensive use of press releases. He clearly indicated that press releases might serve an invaluable function for articulation of issues, but the very deliberate nature of such releases inhibited their use. The candidate indicated that frequent press releases would be desirable but that time prohibited such a schedule. He explained that he carefully processes all such releases personally in order to prevent consequences resulting from subsequent modification in positions or indiscreet language usage.

Mr. Z's campaign efforts in one area were affected in a way consistent with his perceptions of issues. During the last week of the campaign, he perceived his position on two issues to have functioned in a very negative sense. One case involved his ardent public advocacy of revised abortion statutes during previous legislative sessions. He had not articulated the issue in his current campaign, nor did it seem a major issue in other state-level campaigns. But he received information that a last minute campaign against revision of abortion statutes would be waged, and he clearly perceived the issue as functioning in a negative sense as a major threat to his success. Similarly, when he was not included among the many candidates who were endorsed by the massive anti-pupil-bussing group, he viewed this development as a serious negative functioning of an issue; in spite of a clear position against cross-town bussing, he considered himself a victim of issues. Further, he said that the negative effects of the abortion and bussing issues constituted the most significant development in the campaign.

In sum, on the basis of this study, issues are conceived by the candidate. There seem to be "non-issues," (or "style issues") and "real issues," (or "position issues"). "Real issues" may serve no positive function in a campaign but they may function in a negative sense. Campaign messages seem to usually function to expose a candidate's name and "non-issues" rather than to articulate "real issue" positions. There seem several reasons that "real issue" positions are not a more intimate part of campaigns: "real issue" positions may function to divide voters along issue lines rather than to induce them to vote for a candidate; preparation of "real issue" positions may be very costly in terms of time and money; and emotional issues which command the electorate's attention are conceived and communicated with great difficulty.

Media Usage. Interviews with the candidate sought to elucidate his use of campaign media. The nature of the messages sent by various media has already been discussed; the candidate's relative ranking of types of media, their timing, and the amount of activity of media types will be discussed in this section.

The use of some media was concentrated during the early stages of the campaign. Other media were used primarily near the end of the campaign. And still other media were consistently utilized throughout the campaign.

The use of yard signs which merely identified the candidate and the office that he sought were an early priority. Mr. Z said that the impact of these was unknown, and, of course, their function was intended as mere name recognition. Nevertheless, Mr. Z seemed concerned that the signs were used extensively and that they were placed early in the campaign. During the early interviews he indicated that their use was proceeding as planned. Mr. Z considered the function of billboards in a similar way. Again, they were designed to merely identify the candidate and the office that he sought. He thought, however, that their impact was more "dramatic" than yard signs. During the first interview, Mr. Z was asked to rank the importance of media, and of those that he was willing to rank, billboards were last.

Among the media used in a concentrated effort near the end of the campaign were advertisements among television, radio, and newspapers, and mailings. Nearly all advertisements were purchased for use in the last few weeks of the campaign. While Mr. Z did not rank the effectiveness of the advertising efforts, he said that radio would be used to only a small extent. He was very concerned about television, however. On several occasions he said that he was not satisfied with the consulting firm's use of television advertisements; he said that they had not taken advantage of the strengths of his candidacy. One advertisement used in the last few weeks of the campaign clearly pleased him, however. When queried, he explained that he had influenced the subject matter; and he said that it was the best that was used. One major mailing effort was used in the campaign; approximately 17,800 voters who were registered with the opposite party received a letter during the last few weeks of the campaign. In addition, Mr. Z said that his staff's efforts to make other mailing contacts throughout the campaign was very good. He ranked these mailing efforts as second in effectiveness.

Other means of contacting voters were evenly stressed throughout the campaign. Personal contacts by the candidate were consistently emphasized by Mr. Z. He ranked this as clearly the most effective type of campaigning, and he said that this would receive his full, personal effort throughout the campaign. It did. He made personal public appearance contacts nearly every evening during the nine week campaign; most often his schedule would include at least three or more different appearances. When asked to estimate the number of persons contacted, he conservatively speculated approximately 35,000, and he estimated that he contacted 300 additional persons during door-to-door canvassing. A second means of campaigning which was considered consistently useful was the influence by friends and associates. Mr. Z said that this means was very good in his campaign, and he ranked it as the third most effective. Hand cards, (small, descriptive and pictorial brochures,) were also consistently used throughout the campaign. Mr. Z was more than satisfied that his consulting firm had done an excellent job in producing these; he ranked the hand cards fifth in effectiveness. As indicated earlier, Mr. Z said that press releases were not used extensively, though he later said that two or three had appeared in a newspaper. Lastly, field work in the form of a telephone campaign and door-to-door canvassing was consistently emphasized throughout the campaign, though it was considerably intensified during the final weeks of the campaign. Mr. Z ranked this means fourth in effectiveness. In addition, the number of contacts made was

very high: Mr. Z's staff estimated that between 10,000 and 30,000 persons had been contacted by phone, and perhaps another 30,000 persons had been contacted by door-to-door canvassing. Naturally, it is not possible to assess how many different persons were contacted by these two means or by the other media discussed.

In sum, some media, yard signs and billboards, were relied upon early in the campaign to identify the candidate's name and the office that he sought. Since the use of these media was not discontinued, in a sense, they also functioned throughout the campaign. Mr. Z ranked their effectiveness very low. Other media, television, radio, and newspaper advertisements, and mailings were concentrated near the end of the campaign. The commercial mass media institutions, (radio, television, and newspapers,)were not ranked by the candidate in terms of their effectiveness, but he could not be considered to have had overwhelming expectations of advertisements. More than 18,000 contacts with voters were made by mailing efforts, and Mr. Z ranked these efforts high in effectiveness. Other means were consistently used throughout the campaign. Personal appearance contacts were ranked most effective by Mr. Z and more than 35,000 such contacts with voters were made. Mr. Z ranked the influence of friends and associates high and the use of hand cards and press releases low. Finally, though he did not rank the use of field workers high, perhaps 60,000 contacts with voters were made by this method.

The Electorate

The perceptions of Mr. Z's candidacy by the electorate might be portrayed in some senses as demonstrating little change during the campaign. On the basis of samples of the electorate in the middle of the campaign and at the end of the campaign, the candidate's image changed little and the perceived issues in the campaign changed little. On the other hand, perceived media use by the electorate did demonstrate some change.

The candidate's image. The image of the candidate was measured on seven, seven-interval semantic differential scales. The scales were scored on a one low, seven high basis. The image of the candidate and his ratings on each scale were slightly positive at Time 1. Little change in image was demonstrated at Time 2. The results for each scale and for the candidate's image are reported in Table 1. The table actually reports two types of candidate image. One concept is called "total image," and it refers to the mean score for all seven scales. The other concept is called "value image." The term "value image" refers to the mean score for all scales except the unknown-known scale. The reason for isolating the unknown-known scale is that it might be considered primarily a name identification factor, whereas the other six scales are more clearly measures of the candidate's image which are expressions of values of the respondents. Both the total image and the value image will be reported.

(Insert Table 1 about here)

Statistical tests of probability to assess statistically significant change between Time 1 and Time 2 were not conducted because visual inspection of the data indicated that changes were very small.

Visual inspection of Table 1 also indicated that Mr. Z's rating on the unknown-known scale was considerably lower than on other scales at both Time 1 and Time 2.

TABLE 1

Means for Candidate's Image

	Mean	
Criterion Measure	Time 1	Time 2
Unknown-Known	3.4 n=136	3.2 n=133
Devious-Straightforward	4.7 n=121	4.7 n=124
Untrustworthy-Trustworthy	4.7 n=120	4.6 n=123
Phony-Real	4.8 n=120	4.7 n=124
Untruthful-Truthful	4.7 n=123	4.6 n=124
Lazy-Industrious	4.7 n=121	4.7 n=123
Uninvolved-Involved	5.0 n=124	4.7 n=118
Total Image	4.1 n=144	4.7 n=146
Value Image	4.8 n=122	4.7 n=123

As such, it was reasoned that the candidate's total image was highly affected by his identification factor. In order to assess the relationship, ratings on the unknown-known scale were held constant and the value image ratings for Time 1 and Time 2 were calculated. The results are reported in Table 2.

(Insert Table 2 about here)

Again, statistical tests of probability were not conducted, in this case because of extreme differences in the size of the n in various cells; the size of the n varies from seven to seventy-three. However the relationship between Mr. Z's identification factor and his value image can be clearly seen in the graph in Figure 1.

(Insert Figure 1 about here)

In general, it appears that the better known that Mr. Z was by the electorate, the better was his value image.

As discussed earlier, previous literature indicates that political party affiliation affects voter perceptions. As such, perceived political party affiliation was held constant and the image ratings for Time 1 and for Time 2 were calculated. Respondents who considered themselves "strongly Democratic" were considered highly perceived Democrats. Respondents who considered themselves "strongly Republican" were considered highly perceived Republicans. Respondents who considered themselves "weak Democrats," "weak Republicans," or "independent or neutral" were considered swing voters. The results are reported in Table 3.

(Insert Table 3 about here)

Again one notes very little change in ratings between Time 1 and Time 2. No statistical tests of probability were conducted, again because of the extreme differences in the size of the n in various cells; the size of the n varies from twenty-one to ninety-one. But visual inspection of Table 3 invites a bit of speculation. First one notices that highly perceived partisans rate Mr. Z higher than lowly perceived partisans (swing voters). But the ratings are not on a strictly partisan basis: Mr. Z, a Democrat, is not rated highest by Democrat and lowest by Republicans. As such, strict partisanship does not affect the ratings. A cue regarding the speculation lies in the identification factor. One notes very little variation among either type of image ratings for any voter strata: the greatest variation is .7 on the 7.0 point scale. But one notes larger differences regarding the identification factor among voter stratas: highly perceived partisans, Republicans and Democrats, rate Mr. Z better known than do swing voters. As such, it is possible that this data implies that candidate image may be as much a matter of name identification by the voters as a product of voter partisanship.

Media usage. Respondents were asked to rank sources of information which were helpful in forming their opinion of Mr. Z; actually these "sources" were media which Mr. Z used to try to communicate with voters. Responses for Time 1 and Time 2 are presented in two forms in Table 4: the number of times that each media was ranked (frequency of ranking) and the weighted importance of each ranking (weighted ranking). The latter ranking was calculated as follows: each time that a media was ranked first, it was assigned a numerical value of ten; each time that it was ranked second, it was assigned a numerical ranking of nine; and so forth until a ranking of tenth was assigned a value of one.

TABLE 2

Correspondence Between Identification Factor and Means for Value Image

	Mean		
Unknown-Known Rating	Time 1	Time 2	Both Time 1 and Time 2
1	4.0 n=35	4.1 n=38	4.0 n=73
2	3.9 n=7	4.1 n=10	4.0 n=17
3	4.7 n=13	4.5 n=9	4.6 n=22
4	4.1 n=17	4.3 n=22	4.2 n=39
5	4.8 n=7	5.6 n=7	5.2 n=14
6	5.4 n=14	6.2 n=10	5.7 n=24
7	6.3 n=22	5.9 n=16	6.1 n=38

FIGURE 1

Correspondence Between Identification Factor and Means for Value Image for Time 1 and Time 2 and Mean for Time 1 Together with Time 2

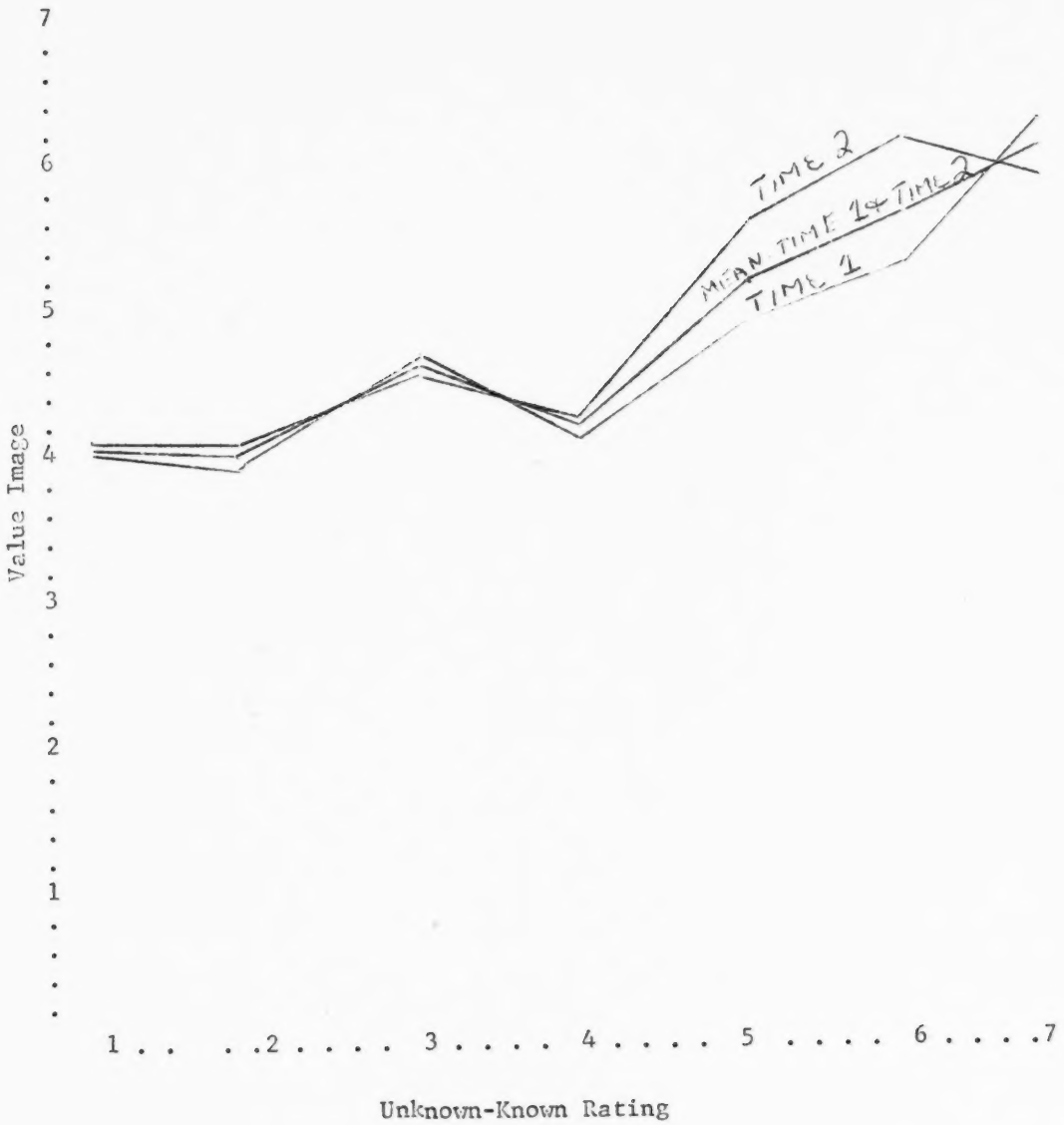

TABLE 3

Means for Identification Factor,
Total Image and Value Image
for Highly Perceived Democrats, Swing Voters
and Highly Perceived Republicans

	Mean					
Party	Identification Factor		Total Image		Value Image	
Perception	Time 1	Time 2	T_1	T_2	T_1	T_2
High Democrats	4.0 n=23	4.2 n=26	4.6 n=24	4.7 n=29	5.1 n=23	5.2 n=23
Swing Voters	3.1 n=84	2.9 n=84	4.0 n=90	4.0 n=91	4.5 n=78	4.6 n=78
High Republicans	3.6 n=28	3.1 n=21	4.2 n=28	4.1 n=23	4.9 n=25	4.5 n=21

(Insert Table 4 about here)

The presentation of this data is more useful if rankings of media in terms of most helpful, second most helpful, etc. are held constant and a matrix sets forth the corresponding types of media. The results are reported in Table 5.

(Insert Table 5 about here)

On the basis of Table 5 it is possible to make some tentative observations about the ranking of each media and about the changes in ranking during the campaign process.

Television and radio news stories (represented as A in Table 5) clearly rank as the most helpful source of information about the candidate. Billboards and yard signs (B in Table 5) became slightly more helpful as the campaign progressed. Newspaper stories (C in Table 5) ranked as a highly useful source of information about the candidate. Personal contacts by Mr. Z and his workers (D in Table 5) became more helpful as the campaign progressed and seemed to have a high rank near the end of the campaign. Television advertisements (E in Table 5) became more helpful as the campaign progressed. The influence of family, friends and associates (F in Table 5) was initially high but declined as the campaign progressed. Newspaper advertisements (G in Table 5) became less helpful as the campaign progressed. Mailed advertisements (H in Table 5) became slightly more helpful as the campaign progressed. Hand cards (I in Table 5) and radio advertisements (J in Table 5) ranked as only slightly helpful as sources of information throughout the campaign. "Other sources" (K in Table 5) were not frequently ranked: as Table 4 reports, only a total of twenty-two respondents during both Time 1 and Time 2 ranked this category at all; in nearly all cases, the respondents who ranked "other source" specified that they had a previous personal acquaintanceship with the candidate.

Media use and candidate image. In addition to knowing to what extent the electorate uses various media, it would be helpful to know which media most favorably contributed to Mr. Z's image. As such, the following operationalization was utilized: media which were mentioned as the most helpful in forming an opinion of Mr. Z were held constant, and Mr. Z's mean image for both Time 1 and Time 2 was calculated. The results are reported in Table 6.

(Insert Table 6 about here)

Again the extreme differences in the size of the n in various cells prohibit the use of statistical tests of probability; the size of the n varies from one to fifty-one. However, some assessment of the data reported in Table 6 is possible in the following way: media which were mentioned as most helpful by only a few respondents seem appropriately eliminated; remaining media can be ranked in terms of decreasing positive images and decreasing positive identification factors. The following media were mentioned by only a few respondents and, as such, may be eliminated: newspaper advertisements, mailed advertisements, handcards, and radio advertisements. Of the remaining media, the following represent the decreasing usefulness of media which gained Mr. Z a positive image: personal familiarity with the candidate prior to his campaign, (other sources); personal contact with the candidate and his workers; influence of the respondent's family, friends, and associates; newspaper stories;

TABLE 4

Use of Types of Media in Terms of
Frequency of Rank and Weighted Rank

Media	Time 1		Time 2	
	FR	WR	FR	WR
A TV & Radio News	61	527	61	535
B Billboards & Yard Signs	42	303	46	345
C Newspaper Stories	44	357	50	379
D Personal Contact with the Candidate or his workers	34	300	46	386
E TV Advertisements	32	260	44	316
F Family, Friends & Associates	44	362	41	310
G Newspaper Advertisements	38	264	26	164
H Mailed Advertisements	22	150	29	179
I Hand Cards, etc.	21	121	19	101
J Radio Advertisements	21	114	25	138
K Other Source	15	140	7	53

Note.-Abbreviations: FR= Frequency of Ranking
WR= Weighted Ranking

TABLE 5

Rank of Types of Media in Terms of
Frequency of Rank and Weighted Rank

	Time 1		Time 2	
Ranking	Frequency of Ranking	Weighted Ranking	Frequency of Ranking	Weighted Ranking
First	A	A	A	A
Second	C & F	D	C	D
Third	---	F	B & D	C
Fourth	B	C	---	B
Fifth	G	B	E	E
Sixth	D	G	F	F
Seventh	E	E	H	H
Eighth	H	H	G	G
Ninth	I & J	K	J	J
Tenth	---	I	I	I
Eleventh	K	J	K	K

TABLE 6

Correspondence Between Mean Image of Time 1 and Time 2 and Most Helpful Media Source

	Mean		
Most Helpful Media	Identification Factor	Total Image	Value Image
TV & Radio News	3.9 n=49	2.9 n=51	4.7 n=49
Billboards & Yard Signs	2.7 n=17	3.8 n=17	4.1 n=16
Newspaper Stories	1.9 n=17	4.8 n=18	4.9 n=18
Personal Contact with the Candidate or his Workers	5.1 n=39	5.4 n=39	5.5 n=38
TV Advertisements	3.7 n=9	4.3 n=11	4.6 n=10
Family, Friends & Associates	4.3 n=14	5.1 n=14	5.2 n=14
Newspaper Advertisements	1.0 n=2	4.0 n=2	4.0 n=2
Mailed Advertisements	1.7 n=3	3.7 n=3	4.1 n=3
Hand Cards, etc.	5.0 n=1	4.0 n=1	3.8 n=1
Radio Advertisements	2.0 n=1	4.4 n=1	4.8 n=1
Other Source	5.9 n=15	5.9 n=15	5.4 n=15

television advertisements; and television and radio news stories and billboards and yard signs together ranked last. The media which were mentioned as most valuable in identifying the candidate in a positive way ranked in a slightly differing order. Again, personal familiarity with the candidate prior to his campaign, personal contact with the candidate and his workers, and the influence of respondents' family, friends, and associates were ranked first, second, and third respectively. But successive ranks were as follows: television and radio news was fourth; television advertisements were fifth; billboards and yard signs were sixth; and newspaper stories were seventh.

Issues. In an open-ended question, respondents were asked to identify the issues relevant to state legislative races. Respondents were asked what issues should be acted upon by the state legislature. Responses were coded into fifty-seven categories. The specific issues are not of intimate importance in this study, though some receiver responses will be compared to the candidate's perceptions. Fifteen issues were clearly perceived by the electorate, as indicated by the frequent number of times that they were mentioned. Of these issues which were operationalized as "most important," a remarkably few underwent "significant" changes between Time 1 and Time 2 in terms of the number of mentions: only three were operationalized as having been "significantly" mentioned more often or less often. Of those not considered "most important," none were operationalized as having "significantly" increased or decreased in mentions. Further, in terms of the categories suggested by Froman and Skipper (1962), only two of the "most important" issues were operationalized as clearly "position issues:" cross-town bussing of pupils and abortion legislation. The other thirteen issues seemed "style issues:' for example, few voters or candidates would seem to favor more pollution, less funding for education, more corruption of public officials, etc.

Correspondence Between Candidate and Electorate Perceptions

On the basis of the reported data regarding Mr. Z's perceptions, and on the basis of the reported data regarding the electorate's perceptions, it is possible to attempt an assessment of the degree to which the candidate's and the electorate's perceptions correspond to one another. It is possible to speculate about Mr. Z's campaign image, about the conceptualization of the electorate, about the nature and function of issues, and about the function of the media.

Candidate image. During several interviews, Mr. Z expressed the opinion that the campaign was progressing in a satisfactory way. This view seems optimistic when compared to the measured perceptions by the electorate of Mr. Z. His image among the sampled electorate was slightly positive by all measures at the approximate midpoint of the campaign, but the image had changed very little in the last two weeks of the campaign. Mr. Z was presented with the electorate data when it was collected. After the first sample, he was genuinely perplexed about the meaning of the data. In the last few days of the campaign he still seemed perplexed, but he was nonetheless confident that his efforts had been satisfactory in regard to identifying himself among the electorate as having a positive image. Further, he said that the image would have been improved if sampling had taken place during the last few days of the campaign, after his final mass media campaign had its full impact. He was at least partly correct: he was one of the four successful candidates in this Senate race and he received more votes than any of this opponents; the discrepancies between this study's samples of Mr. Z's image and his electoral success will be mentioned below.

Mr. Z's perceptions seemed correct in another, related sense: he said that his everyday person-to-person contact with the electorate demonstrated voters' increasing familiarity with his candidacy; he seemed to regard this as a very positive sign of his campaign success. Samples of the electorate's perceptions seem to substantiate this view. As figure 1 demonstrates, Mr. Z's image seemed to improve in a way that closely corresponded to the degree to which he was considered identifiable by the electorate. Further, previous literature presented the expectation that voters' perceived party affiliation would influence their perceptions of the candidate. On the other hand, Mr. Z believed that party perception would not function to influence voters' attitudes toward his candidacy. Mr. Z's view seems correct. While highly perceived Democrats among the sampled electorate rated their own party's candidate highest on all measures, highly perceived Republicans did not rate Mr. Z lower than lowly perceived partisans, perceived neutrals, and perceived independents.

Issues and Media Messages. There are several dimensions to the analysis of issues as perceived by the candidate and the electorate in this study: the nature and role of issues in general, and an analysis of some specific issues in this campaign.

Mr. Z suggested that state legislative campaigns do not function on the basis of "real issues." He said that "non-issues" are the primary focus of campaigns on this level; that is, like Froman and Skipper's (1962) conceptualization, articulation of issues would focus primarily on the "style" used to represent abstract value goals with which nearly everyone agrees despite partisanship. On the basis of the "issues" that samples of the electorate reported perceiving, Mr. Z was largely correct. Nearly all issues mentioned by the electorate seemed primarily non-issues; the two issues which seemed clearly position issues, cross-town bussing of pupils and abortion legislation, will be discussed below.

If Mr. Z's perceptions of the lack of importance of "real issues" were incorrect, it would seem that a noticeable impact of the articulation of these issues would be apparent; samples of the electorate at two distinctly separate times would seemingly indicate dramatic increases in attention to those issues. Such increases did not seem dominant. While one position issue, cross-town bussing of pupils, seemed to gain in importance, only one other issue, welfare matters, was mentioned "significantly" more often by voters. These two issues deserve more attention below.

Perceptions of some specific issues by Mr. Z and by the electorate may be subjected to some speculation. Probably the most crucial issue was cross-town bussing of pupils. While Mr. Z felt that most "real" issues were not of great importance in campaigns on the state legislative level, he perceived cross-town bussing as an exception. As such, he tried to clearly articulate his opposition to bussing from the beginning of the campaign. The electorate also perceived bussing as a very important issue. With the exception of the issue of pollution, a "non-issue," the issue of bussing was mentioned far more often by the electorate than any other issue. Indeed, samples of the electorate indicated that the issue became more important as the campaign period progressed: it was mentioned by "significantly"

more respondents during Time 2 than during Time 1. Mr. Z perceived the issue as having major importance at the beginning of the campaign, as did the electorate. He also recognized its continuing or increasing importance at the end of the campaign, as did the electorate: he regarded his failure to receive the endorsement of the anti-bussing group as the most significant development of the campaign. It is difficult to speculate about the reasons for Mr. Z not having received the anti-bussing endorsement; but it seems most significant that he perceived the importance of the issue in a way very similar to the electorate.

Another issue that the electorate seemed to perceive as important was welfare matters. At Time 2 it was mentioned by twelve more respondents than at Time 1. This increase cannot be explained on the basis of the data collected by interviews with the candidate, and, as such, one might conclude that Mr. Z did not perceive the welfare issue in the same way as the electorate. On the other hand, when he was queried early in the campaign regarding a prediction of how voters would respond to the question about issues, Mr. Z indicated that welfare matters would be mentioned often.

The abortion issue was perceived by Mr. Z with great concern when he was told that a public campaign would be mounted in opposition to the position which he had advocated during previous legislative sessions. This perception by Mr. Z seems at least partly substantiated by samples of the electorate. The issue was included among the fifteen "most important" issues perceived by the electorate.

Mr. Z predicted three other issues that would be mentioned by the electorate. One such issue was corruption of public officials; Mr. Z seems to have been correct, as this was one of the fifteen issues mentioned most often. He also suggested that workmen's benefits for public employees would be mentioned by the electorate; again Mr. Z was correct, as this issue was also one of those considered "most important" by the electorate. Finally Mr. Z suggested that the care of senior citizens would be frequently mentioned by the electorate; in this case, Mr. Z's perceptions do not seem as accurate. Care of senior citizens was mentioned by a very few respondents and, as such, was not operationalized as one of the "most important" issues; one could probably argue that other issues which were mentioned might be directly related to senior citizen care, but none of the fifteen "most important" issues seemed to be of this type.

One might also assess the correspondence between the candidate's and the electorate's perceptions by analysis of the specific issues on which the candidate focused his campaign: one of these, conflict of interest among public officials, has already been discussed as an issue which was mentioned very often by the electorate. The other two issues on which Mr. Z focused during his campaign were not often mentioned by the electorate, however. One might reason that the issues articulated by a candidate during a campaign would be perceived by the electorate. This was not the case with the issues of 1) full financial disclosure by candidates and 2) the obligations of public utility companies. Financial disclosure was not mentioned by any respondents. Public utilities, including the telephone company, garbage problems, and other utilities, were mentioned by only a very few respondents. As such, Mr. Z's articulation of issues in his campaign corresponds to the electorate's perceptions in a less than perfect way.

Of the fifteen "most important" issues perceived by the electorate, ten were neither predicted by Mr. Z nor were they a part of his campaign. Nearly all of these issues seem to be style issues. One issue, pollution, received many more mentions than any other issue. As such, one might conclude that Mr. Z did not clearly perceive a large majority of the issues that the electorate perceived. On the other hand, perhaps the oral interviews with the candidate neither challenged the candidate to list all possible issues, nor did they invite such a lengthy list.

In sum, Mr. Z's perceptions of the nature of issues seems essentially similar to the perceptions of the electorate. "Real issues" did not seem to dominate the campaign. Further, those "real issues" which were perceived by the electorate, cross-town bussing of pupils and abortion legislation, received the attention of the candidate. Mr. Z did not perceive all of the style issues in the same way that they were perceived by the electorate: welfare matters, for example, seemed to become increasingly important during the campaign, and this change did not seem to receive the attention of the candidate. Mr. Z correctly predicted some of the style issues that were most frequently mentioned by the electorate; at least one other prediction, care of senior citizens, seems to have been incorrect. Some, but not all, of the issues on which Mr. Z focused his campaign corresponded to those mentioned frequently by the electorate. Finally, the electorate perceived a number of issues that Mr. Z did not mention.

Media usage. Assessment of the correspondence between the candidate's and the electorate's perceptions of media use is not only most difficult, but also seems imprecise in some senses: pre-campaign and Primary Election campaign data about the candidate may have affected the electorate's perceptions. The electorate's perceptions were first sampled four weeks after the end of the Primary Election campaign. As such, responses to a question regarding the most helpful means of forming an opinion of a candidate might be influenced by the respondents' recollections of the Primary Election campaign. Further, Mr. Z was a public figure, indeed he was an Assemblyman, prior to the present campaign, and he was the top vote-getter in this Senate District's Primary Election; as such, responses may be influenced by recollection of media use during this pre-campaign period. While this possibility at first seems a contamination factor in the assessment of electorate perceptions, an alternative explanation is discussed below.

Mr. Z clearly considered the most effective means of campaigning to be personal contacts with voters by himself. As reported earlier, Mr. Z viewed the substance of his campaign as an attempt to persuade voters on an individual basis to vote for him. When queried, he ranked this means as clearly most effective. Analysis of electorate data reveals that his attempts had some impact. In terms of the media which were ranked by the electorate, as reported in Table 5, personal contact with Mr. Z became increasingly helpful as the campaign progressed and ranked high near the end of the campaign. Further, as reported in the discussion of Table 6, personal contact was the second most helpful means which aided the electorate in identifying Mr. Z's name and the second most helpful means of contributing to a positive image of the candidate. When one considers the only other media which was more helpful to the electorate in identifying Mr. Z's name and contributing to a positive image of him, the personal contact media seems even more significant: the most helpful means was "other sources," and nearly all respondents who identified this source had a previous personal acquaintanceship with Mr. Z; one would assume that such an acquaintanceship would result in a high identification factor and a high image rating for Mr. Z.

Of those media ranked by Mr. Z, he considered mailings to be second in effectiveness. To the electorate, however, as reported in Table 5, mailings were not ranked as a highly helpful means of forming an opinion of Mr. Z. Further, as reported in Table 6, so few respondents ranked mailing as the most helpful source that it seems highly unlikely that this means contributed to Mr. Z's identification factor or his positive image.

Hand cards were ranked by Mr. Z as the fifth most effective means of campaigning, however electorate data does not substantiate hand cards as a highly useful source of information: Table 5 reveals that hand cards ranked very low; and Table 6 reveals that so few respondents ranked them as the most helpful source that they probably contributed very little to Mr. Z's identification factor or his positive image.

Mr. Z initially considered billboards and yard signs as the least effective of the media that he ranked. He was very surprised when electorate data revealed that these media were very helpful in forming an opinion of Mr. Z. He seemed more surprised when the second sampling of the electorate revealed that billboards and yard signs were considered as being even more helpful. Table 5 reports the ratings. However, in terms of contributing to Mr. Z's identification factor and his positive image, billboards and yard signs were apparently not highly positive factors; as reported in Table 6, they ranked sixth and seventh respectively in terms of most helpful media contributing to positive identification and positive image.

While Mr. Z did not rank all types of media, it is possible to speculate about his assessments of other media and the electorate's perceptions of these. Mr. Z said that radio advertisements would be used very little. As reported in Table 5, the electorate similarly considered them of little use in forming their opinion of Mr. Z. Also, as reported in Table 6, so few respondents ranked radio advertisements as the most helpful source that they probably contributed very little to Mr. Z's identification factor and his positive image.

While Mr. Z had a low opinion of his television advertisements in general, he was very pleased with an advertisement which was used during the end of his campaign. Correspondingly, as reported in Table 5, the electorate data indicates that television advertisements became more helpful in forming an opinion of Mr. Z as the campaign progressed. The advertisements ranked fifth in terms of contributing to both a positive identification factor and a positive image.

Mr. Z said that press releases were not used extensively during the campaign. He said that only two or three appeared in newspapers, and presumably no more were used for television and radio news stories. He also reported no news stories about him that were not generated by press releases. As reported in Table 6, those respondents who ranked television and radio news stories as most helpful yielded an identification factor which was fourth for all media and sixth in terms of a positive image. Those who ranked newspaper stories as most helpful yielded an identification factor which was seventh for all media and fourth in terms of a positive image. While these identification factors and image ratings do not seem particularly high, it is remarkable that the electorate ranked television and radio news stories most helpful of all media in forming an opinion of Mr. Z;

further, they also ranked newspaper stories very helpful in forming opinions. The rankings are reported in Table 5. As suggested earlier, these rankings may indicate contamination of electorate perceptual data. On the other hand, pre-campaign information gained through news stories might simply be considered a more stable or permanent type of information than the other types conveyed during the campaign. For example, perhaps stories about Mr. Z's success as the top vote-getter in this Senate District's Primary Election are of a permanent type.

Contamination of electorate perceptual data is implied regarding the media of newspaper advertisements. Mr. Z said that newspaper advertisements were used only in the final weeks of the campaign. As such, the data reported in Table 5 is remarkable: respondents rated newspaper advertisements as decreasing in helpfulness as the campaign progressed. It seems likely that respondents were recalling the newspaper advertisement campaign during the final weeks of the Primary Election campaign which was just prior to the General Election campaign. So few respondents ranked newspaper advertisements as the most helpful source of information that it is unlikely that the advertisements contributed in a significant way to Mr. Z's identification factor or his positive image.

Lastly, respondents ranked their family, friends, and associates as a source of information which helped to form an opinion of Mr. Z. This data was an artifact of the design of this study because no candidate perceptual data was correspondent. However, the influence of interpersonal relationships has received the attention of electoral analysts such as Campbell, et al. (1964, p. 161). As reported in Table 5, respondents in the present study considered family, friends, and associates initially a helpful means of forming an opinion of Mr. Z, but the influence declined as the campaign progressed. In terms of respondents who considered this means of forming an opinion as the most helpful means, as reported in Table 6, it yielded the third highest identification factor and the third most positive image for Mr. Z.

In sum, Mr. Z perceived his campaign's use of media in a way not entirely like the perceptions of the electorate. The electorate's perceptions imply that some media functioned in the way that Mr. Z perceived, but some media did not. Mr. Z considered personal contacts with the voters by himself to be most effective; the electorate seemed to perceive this means as increasingly helpful in forming their opinion, and except for those who had a previous personal acquaintanceship with Mr. Z, this means yielded the highest identification factor and the most positive image of all media. Further, Mr. Z perceived the effectiveness of television advertisements in a way similar to the electorate's perceptions; an advertisement which Mr. Z perceived as effective may have contributed to the increase in helpfulness perceived by the electorate in forming an opinion of Mr. Z through this means. Also, Mr. Z's campaign made very little use of radio advertisements, and the electorate seemed to perceive these as having little use. On the other hand, Mr. Z was surprised by the electorate's perceptions of billboards and yard signs as means of forming an opinion of him. Furthermore, he considered hand cards and mailings as more effective than electorate perceptual data implies. Probably the most remarkable finding in this analysis of media usage regards news stories on television and radio and in newspapers: Mr. Z said that few stories were reported during the campaign, but the electorate clearly ranked news stories on television and radio as most helpful in forming their opinion of Mr. Z and they also ranked

newspaper stories as very helpful; the perceptions of the electorate seem to imply that voters recalled news stories which preceded the campaign more vividly than information received by other media during the campaign.

Some contamination of electorate perceptual data seems present in this study regarding newspaper advertisements: Mr. Z said that advertisements were used only near the end of the campaign, but the electorate perceived them as more helpful at the beginning of the campaign than at the end; voters were probably recalling advertisements which appeared at the end of the Primary Election campaign just five weeks earlier.

Finally, the respondents' friends, family, and associates were regarded as helpful in forming an opinion of Mr. Z early in the campaign and less helpful later in the campaign.

CONCLUSIONS

This study selected a state legislative campaign and some important implications should be noted. First, the generalizability of the findings is limited in two respects. Generalizability must be limited to campaigns on this electoral level, and generalizability is limited to the context of the present campaign: that is, this campaign was just one of many which sought the electorate's attention in [illegible] election year, and a campaign which would occur singly might function in a very different way. On the other hand, this case study was selected by systematic means through the use of critieria specified prior to selection; as such, there is good reason to think that the findings of this case study are representative of other campaigns within the above limitations. Further, this study made no attempt to predict electoral results; rather, the communication phenomena which preceded the election were the focus. As such, there seems little need for concern regarding the discrepancies between attitudinal and perceptual findings and electoral behavior.

Probably the most remarkable finding of this study is that the candidate's image and identification factor changed very little from slightly better than neutral between the mid-point of the campaign and the week just prior to the election. Perhaps Mr. Z was correct when he speculated that the second sampling would have been significantly different if it had been drawn a few days later. On the other hand, even if this were true, the impact of the weeks of devoted and costly effort by the candidate and the campaign workers seems very small.

The findings of the study also seem to accent the importance of name identification for a number of reasons. First, the candidate's message and media strategies were designed to a large degree for name exposure. Second, voter data reported earlier in Table 3 emphasizes the importance of name exposure. All cells reveal a candidate image which is better than neutral (3.5 on a 7.0 scale), except for three cells: near the mid-point of the campaign and near the end of the campaign, swing voters rated the candidate's identification factor lower than neutral, and strong opposite party partisans rated him lower than neutral at the end of the campaign; the two former ratings may imply a major functional weakness in the campaign's failure to make the candidate's name identifiable among those voters who are often considered most persuadable and very important; the latter rating

together with the two former ratings form a trend whereby the candidate became less identifiable as the campaign progressed. A third reason that the candidate's identification factor is important is revealed in Figure One: the candidate's image tended to increase in a way that corresponded to the degree to which he was identifiable. Finally, the importance of the identification factor is revealed when one considers the perceived party affiliations of the electorate. The sampled voters' images of the candidate were not a result of strict partisanship. Indeed, the candidate said that voter partisanship may have little effect on his image; he was correct. Though Democrats rated Mr. Z, a Democrat, higher than did Republicans, both groups rated him higher than swing voters. Thus, whereas partisans of the opposite party are sometimes considered as "the opposition," the voter data in this study suggests a slightly different conception. The candidate's image among partisans was almost exclusively higher than among "independent" and "neutral" voters. This phenomenon is probably a complex interaction of voter predispositions, political socialization or "politicization," partisanship, involvement, (Sears, 1969, pp. 348-351) and of candidate identifiability, as discussed above. It seems that "politicized" voters, strong partisans, may be more predisposed to being able to identify a candidate, even though he may be of the opposite party, and they may be more predisposed toward rating him in a favorable way than independent voters or swing voters.

The media used in the campaign were not perceived in the same way by the candidate and the electorate. Most notably, the two most helpful media in yielding the candidate a positive identification factor and a positive image were not deliberately planned campaign strategies. As one would expect, acquaintanceships with Mr. Z prior to his candidacy yielded his most positive image. However, those who relied on media during the campaign seemed to credit news stories as the most helpful media, and this seems remarkable since few stories were planned or used in the campaign: as such, again, media strategies which were not directly planned for use in the campaign seemed to function as a major aid to Mr. Z's candidacy. And one other type of influence which was not a planned campaign strategy influenced respondents early in the campaign: the influence of friends, family, and associates. Still other incongruities existed between the planned strategies of the candidate and the electorate's perceptions of the media. The candidate was surprised by the electorate's perceptions of billboards and yard signs as a helpful means in forming an opinion of him. And electorate perceptual data implies that hand cards and mailings were not as effective as the candidate had thought. On the other hand, as the candidate accurately perceived, his personal contacts with voters yielded his most positive image and identification factor of all media. Further, the candidate's perceptions of the function of television and radio advertisements were at least partly substantiated by the electorate's perceptions.

With regard to issue-oriented campaign messages, the candidate seemed to perceive the nature of issues and specific issues in a way similar to the electorate. "Real issues" didn't dominate the campaign, but those which were perceived of importance by the electorate were attended to by the candidate. Finally, the candidate was able to correctly predict many, but not all, of the "non-issues" perceived by the electorate; and the "non-issues" on which he based his campaign were not all perceived by the electorate.

In terms of a broad conceptual framework which explains the findings of this study, much attention and research seems needed. For example, whereas studies by Sherif, Sherif, and Nebergall (1965), Carlson and Habel (1969), and Beck (1969) indicate that the theory of social judgment-involvement explains persuasion phenomena in Presidential elections, that theory does not seem a satisfactory explanation for campaigns on this electoral level. Voter data in this study may imply some assimilation-contrast phenomena, but the theory of social judgment-involvement would predict significant attitude change among strong partisans whereas very little attitude change took place in this study. Perhaps a conceptual framework, such as information theory (Broadhurst and Darnell, 1965; McCroskey, et al, 1971, pp. 27-33,)which puts considerable emphasis on redundancy and "noise" would be more suitable to explain the lack of attitude change. It may be that voters are so deluged with campaign information during an election period that a candidate's attempt to merely make his name identifiable may be the most important factor in his election. If this were the case, media and messages which are designed for this purpose seem much more important than media which focus on "issues."

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